

NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS

1201 Sixteenth Street N W Washington D C

VOL. 1

DECEMBER 1933

No. 7



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

The most widely read editorial ever written was published in the *New York Sun*, 36 years ago. The *Sun* reprints it annually; it has been quoted in a score of languages the world over; and to carry on the tradition that every editor quotes it at this season, we reprint excerpts from it here, with regret that limited space prohibits printing it in full. The famous editorial was an answer to the following letter:

Dear Editor: I am eight years old. Some of my friends tell me there is no Santa Claus. Please tell me the truth.
—Virginia O'Hanlon.

"Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect in intellect, as compared with the boundless world about

him. . . . Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound . . . How dreary the world would be if there were no Santa Claus. It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias . . . Not to believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign there is no Santa Claus.

"The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see . . . No Santa Claus? Thank God! He lives and lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood."

Increasing Membership

Reports from various sources throughout the country indicate that parent-teacher membership is experiencing a "national recovery." In recognition of this trend, the National President recently wrote to the state presidents as follows: "We thank you for the indicated large increase in membership. It is due in large part to your zeal in promoting this most important phase of our work. If our schools are to be protected, they must have the force of numbers back of them. From all reports, we are well on our way to a fine increase, and we hope that your state will be one of those far exceeding its goal."

National Thrift Week—January 17-23.

Executive Meeting

The mid-year meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers will be held in Chicago, the week of January 2. Mrs. Hugh Bradford, National President, will preside. Plans for the National Convention in Des Moines, Iowa, May 13-19, 1934, will be discussed.

"Our Public Schools," a Source Book on Education, for the layman, will be compiled by Miss Charl Williams, Fifth Vicepresident, to be published by the Congress as soon as possible.

On the Air

The first of a series of 12 weekly programs on parent education will be broadcast by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers on Tuesday, January 16, 1934, from 3:30-4:00 p. m., Eastern Standard Time, over the red network of the National Broadcasting Company. If the N.B.C. radio station serving your community is not planning to broadcast these programs, you may help in extending the audience by writing to the radio station manager suggesting that you and other parent-teacher members desire to hear these broadcasts. A letter of appreciation to radio stations broadcasting the programs will also carry weight in connection with future broadcasts of this type.

• • • National Committees At Work • • •

Is Radio on Trial?

"Is radio education on trial? Is it to be hammered at by zealous prosecuting attorneys in the attempt to convict it? Are apathy and half-interest to sit on the jury?"

"Was the sewing machine on trial? Yes, it appeared to be. For nearly a generation it stood on our doorstep waiting to save the fingers and eyes and strength of our housewives. But it finally came in and now we realize that the sewing machine was not on trial. It was our own good judgment that was in doubt."

"The radio is merely a remover of space as far as the disseminating of sound is concerned. There is nothing especially mysterious about it as a teaching medium. It can convey to the classroom all that can be carried by sound. It can carry it to a million as readily as to one. It can, therefore, if we are receptive, introduce into education a labor-saving element such as the steam shovel has introduced into engineering. As the steam shovel enables a single man to do the work heretofore requiring a hundred men, so can the microphone multiply the accomplishment of a single teacher . . . Motion pictures and radio must grow in use . . . There is an insistent demand that education shall avail itself of all possible labor-saving devices . . . Let us take advantage of the economy and enrichment which radio can bring into the classroom. Let us give radio an even break."—*B. H. Darrow, National Chairman of Radio.*

* * * *

National Office Visitors

Miss Marian L. Telford, National Chairman of the Committee on Safety.

Mr. B. H. Darrow, National Chairman of the Committee on Radio.



Miss Elizabeth Wells Robertson, District Supervisor of Art, Public Schools, Chicago, and National Chairman of Art, was elected president of the newly created Art Department of the National Education Association at its Chicago convention.

Summer Round-Up

The whole course of many a child's life is being changed by the Summer Round-Up of the Children. Reports of the 1933 Summer Round-Up now being received by the National Office disclose many instances where health has been restored or tragedy averted by the timely application of health measures. From Alabama comes the following story, typical of many cases:

"A boy seven years old was brought to the Summer Round-Up examination with a badly enlarged knee joint. An x-ray revealed a tubercular infection resulting from a three-year-old fracture. An operation was performed and the infected parts removed. If this operation had not been performed, it would have been necessary within a few months for his leg to have been amputated above the knee. His leg was in a cast over three months, but he is now able to walk on crutches. His knee joint will be stiff, but he will be able to use his leg."

Reports have not yet been received from many units which carried on the Round-Up this year.

Local units are urged to report to the Summer Round-Up Division of the National Office, regardless of whether or not they carried through the campaign according to national requirements.

* * * *

New National Life Members

Iowa—Mrs. M. P. Summers, 1919 Rebecca St., Sioux City

Missouri—Mrs. James F. Cook, 1625 Paul Brown Building, St. Louis

Ohio—Mrs. O. C. Bird, Athens

Oregon—Mrs. William Brice, Portland

West Virginia—Mr. E. C. Leonhart, Charleston.

Mrs. Summers, Mrs. Cook, Mrs. Brice and Mr. Leonhart, as retiring state presidents, were presented with National Life Memberships by their state boards.

Safety

"Keeping Them Safe," a lively radio skit depicting the narrow escapes from accidents and sudden death of a normal but careless family in its own home, is one of three types of radio broadcasts included in a packet of safety material for parent-teacher associations, recently distributed to state safety chairmen by Miss Marian Telford, National Safety Chairman. The first broadcast is a straight talk on safety by a single speaker; the second is an interview between two people (a type of program apparently increasing in popularity) and the third, the playlet with several characters.

"These broadcasts are, of course, entirely suggestive," says Miss Telford. "They are really illustrative types. Each of them can be improved by the addition of local material."

Other material in the packet includes Selected Accident Facts, The School Boy Patrol in 1933, School Buses, Safety Tests, and Studying Home Accidents.

Miss Telford has been elected state safety chairman for the New York Congress of Parents and Teachers.



Miss Julia Wright Merrill, National Chairman of Library Service, attended the Conference on the Emergency Needs of Women, held in Washington at the White House on November 20.

* * * *

Child Welfare Magazine

The January issue of *Child Welfare* is brim full of profitable, practical, and provocative articles. The following titles suggest the substance to be found in some of the articles themselves:

Mental Hygiene and Education, by Kenneth E. Appel, M.D.

Things for Idle Hands to Do, by Alida C. Bowler, National Chairman of Juvenile Protection.

Keeping Adolescent Confidences, by Martha Pratt Haislip.

Between Meals, by Marion R. Farren.

Founders Day

Commemorating the anniversary of the founding of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, Founders Day—February 17—will be widely observed by parent-teacher associations.

Celebration of Founders Day offers an opportunity to every local unit—

To stress the purpose of parent-teacher work, emphasizing the ideals and inspirations of the founders

To create an interest in parent-teacher membership

To present the achievements of the organization

To emphasize the nationwide responsibility of every individual to every child

To share in the extension of parent-teacher work in the state and nation.

Helpful material for Founders Day programs is contained in National Congress books, leaflets, and pageants. "Celebrating Founders Day," mimeographed sheets giving information for talks and program helps, may be secured from the National Office.

Among the Founders Day pageants is a new one, written by May E. Peabody, for the Seattle Convention. "The Spirit of the Congress," symbolizing what the Congress is and what it hopes to accomplish, may be presented simply or elaborately, as desired.

Annual Summary of Parent-Teacher Information

The most complete report of parent-teacher work ever made will be published in the *Proceedings* of the National Congress in 1934. More than 26,000 local unit report forms have been printed and sent from the National Office to the 37 states which ordered the National blanks on or before December 1. Some states are having the blanks printed in the state.

Each state decides the date when local units reports are due—not later than June 1. A state chairman of reports is responsible for compiling the state summary, and sending it to the National Office, not later than July 1. It is hoped that all Congress units will be represented in this annual national report of P.T.A. work.

Child Labor Day

Following its custom of nearly 30 years, the National Child Labor Committee has designated the week-end of January 27-29 as the period for the observance of Child Labor Day. Publications and posters for use in Child Labor Day programs will be sent free of charge by the National Child Labor Committee, 419 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

School Plight Described

A graphic picture of the effect of the economic crisis on schools is presented in a new 15-page, illustrated leaflet, *The Deepening Crisis in Education*, prepared by the Office of Education. "Casualties of the Crisis," "Children Without Schools," and "Why Schools Lack Funds" are among the subjects discussed. The leaflet is available from the Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., at 5 cents a copy.

Injured

Mrs. Arthur C. Watkins, Education Secretary, is confined to her home, recovering from injuries sustained in an automobile accident which occurred while she was engaged in field work on Long Island on November 17.

Addresses Available

Single copies of the following are available from the National Office:

"What Radio Can Do for the Parents and Children of this Generation." Radio address by Mrs. Hugh Bradford, National President, over a national network on November 13.

"The Home in the Changing Order." Address by Mrs. B. F. Langworthy, First Vicepresident, to the American Vocational Association, December 3-9.

"The Parent-Teacher Association in Relation to Reconstruction in Education." Address by Mrs. B. F. Langworthy, at the Parent Education Institute held at the University of Michigan, November 3.

"The Position of Parent-Teacher Organizations in the Education of the Future." Address by Charl Williams, Fifth Vicepresident, at the convention of the Missouri State Teachers Association, St. Louis, November 11, and to the Virginia Education Association, Richmond, November 30.

Rural Needs Stressed

"We are anxious to work closely with the P.T.A. in the neighborhood groupings in getting boy scout training and service for the country boys.

"You will be interested to know that in an investigation made of our penitentiaries, reform schools, industrial schools, in many states, we find that there has been a very great increase in crime amongst the country people. Some of the Mid-West states are showing in their records of their annual reports that by far the largest number and the highest percentage per capita of inmates in the state Penitentiary come directly from the farms and the rural neighborhoods. In South Dakota, for instance, I found that during the past two years, 55% of the total number of inmates came from the farm.

"Last year, the rural population gained over a million people. We have begun a process in this country of decentralization from our large cities and centers. This is a wholesome thing providing that we provide something for the young people when they get out there."—O. H. Benson, *National Director of Rural Scouting, Boy Scouts of America.*

* * *

A three-year subscription to *Child Welfare* for \$2 is being offered. The regular subscription price is \$1 a year.

* * *

Wanted

Please check your publicity material and send to the *National Congress Bulletin* Editor any of the following:

Clippings of especially timely news stories about state and National Congress activities and significant or unusual local projects.

Scripts of short and lively radio sketches or talks.

Photographs of state or local activities suitable for use in *Child Welfare Magazine* or national publicity.

Samples of charters for local parent-teacher associations are needed by the National Office for lending purposes. The National Office reference files contain such charters from only six states. Please send at least three copies of local unit charters for our permanent file of material from each state branch.

• • • News From the State Branches • • •

Alaska

Newspaper clipping from Ketchikan: "The Masonic Temple presented a busy scene all day yesterday. From nine in the morning until five at night, children of preschool age passed in and out. The Summer Round-Up was on. Members of the parent-teacher association and American Legion Auxiliary helped the mothers with the children and kept a complete record of each child . . . Of the 108 children who had been registered at some previous time, 102 were at the clinic. The principal defect was found to be of teeth. Of the 102 children examined, only 10 were found to be of fair nutrition while the remaining 92 were of good and excellent nutrition . . . This is the first time in Ketchikan that a clinic of preschool children has taken place and those in charge and those who donated their work feel that they have accomplished something really worthwhile for the youngsters of Ketchikan."

Alabama

To strengthen the link between the local unit and the State Congress, a charter will be issued to each local unit, according to a recent decision of the state board. A committee has been appointed to work out a plan for keeping these charters alive.

Nearly a hundred new units are reported by Mrs. James Fitts Hill, state president.

Arizona

E. C. Santeo, of Sacaton, on the Gila River Indian reservation, a Pima Indian and leader of his tribe in educational matters, is president of the Pima Parent-Teacher Association. This is one of the very few Indian parent-teacher associations in the United States and is believed to be the only one which boasts of one of the braves of the tribe as president.

California

Recommendations made by the National President in her annual report, May 1933, are being used as a basis for programs in schools of instruction in *California*.

Connecticut

A new creed, stating clearly and concisely the principles of the parent-teacher association, is sought by the *Connecticut* Congress in a statewide contest. The contest will be continued throughout the winter and will close in March, 1934. The winning creed will be announced at the *Connecticut* state convention in the spring.

Indiana

More than 1000 members are enrolled in study groups in *Indiana*, reports Mrs. J. C. Todd, study group chairman.

Maine

"Mme. President," a satiric skit by Mrs. Ralph B. Knott, showing the trials and tribulations of a P.T.A. president and the ultimate satisfaction in a job well done, was presented at the banquet of the *Maine* Congress, October 12, by the Bangor Council.

Maryland

Delegates to the state convention were hospitably entertained at the dormitory of the Salisbury State Normal School. Students were dismissed from some of their classes to attend convention sessions and many of them attended meetings during free periods. Mrs. Ross Coppage of Baltimore was re-elected president.

Oregon

"At last we are able to protect our title. Only organizations in membership in the *Oregon* Congress of Parents and Teachers may lawfully use the wording 'parent-teacher association' in their name. Under the provisions of a law passed at the last session of the Legislature, we have registered this name for the use of Congress units only. If there are associations using this title in your vicinity that are not in state and national membership, please notify your state headquarters, giving the name, location, and name of their president."—*Oregon Parent-Teacher*, Oct. 1923.

Virginia

Uniting two lay organizations which have worked for educational advancement and home and school cooperation for many years, the *Virginia* Congress of Parents and Teachers and the *Virginia* Cooperative Education Association were merged into one organization at a joint convention held in Richmond, November 27-29. The new organization will be known as "The Cooperative Education Association, the *Virginia* Branch of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers." A headquarters office will be maintained in Richmond.

Dr. W. T. Sanger, President of the Medical College of *Virginia*, Richmond, was elected president. Mrs. S. C. Cox, former president of the *Virginia* Congress, is first vice-president.

Texas

Approximately 11,000 more members than at the same date last year were reported by the *Texas* Congress on October 31.

Washington

Mrs. Howard V. Wilson, Field Secretary for the *Washington* Congress, was fatally injured in an automobile accident in Tacoma, November 9. She died the next day. Mrs. Wilson was widely known by National Congress members for her fine work as hostess city chairman for the National Convention held in Seattle last May.

West Virginia

Standard schools are required by the *West Virginia* State Department of Education to have a parent-teacher association.

**New State Presidents**

New Mexico—Mrs. S. P. Nanniga, 117 Columbia Avenue, Albuquerque

Tennessee—Mrs. George E. Oldham, 3279 Dellwood Drive, Knoxville

Virginia—Dr. W. T. Sanger, President, Medical College of Virginia, Richmond